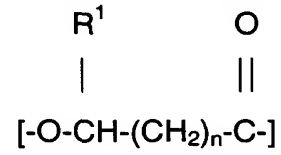
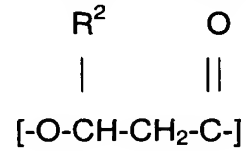
What is Claimed is:

1. A method for enhancing the rate of crystallization of a first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate comprising a copolymer of at least two randomly repeating monomer units, wherein the first randomly repeating monomer unit has the structure (I):



(I)

wherein R^1 is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and n is 1 or 2; and the second randomly repeating monomer unit is different from the first randomly repeating monomer unit and comprises at least one monomer selected from the group consisting of the structures (II) and (III):



(II)

wherein R^2 is a C3-C19 alkyl or C3-C19 alkenyl, and

(III)

wherein m is from 2 to about 16, and wherein at least about 50 mole % of the copolymer comprises randomly repeating monomer units having the structure of the first randomly repeating monomer unit (I), and further wherein the copolymer has a melting point Tm1, the method comprising solution blending the first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate with a second crystallizable biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate comprising at least one randomly repeating monomer unit having the structure (IV):

(IV)

wherein R^3 is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and p is 1 or 2;

wherein the second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate has a melting point Tm2, wherein Tm2 is at least about 20°C greater than Tm1; and wherein the second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate is finely dispersed within the bulk of the first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate.

2. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the solution blending comprises dissolving the first and second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoates in a common solvent and allowing the dissolved polymers to crystallize.

3. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the solution blending comprises dissolving the first and second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoates in a mixture of two or more common solvents and allowing the dissolved polymers to crystallize.

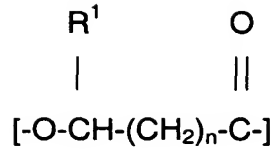
4. A method as defined in claim 2, wherein the crystallization is achieved by cooling the solvent containing the dissolved polymers.

5. A method as defined in claim 2, wherein the crystallization is achieved by precipitation of the polymers in a non-solvent.

6. A method as defined in claim 2, wherein the crystallization is achieved by evaporation of the solvent from the polymers.

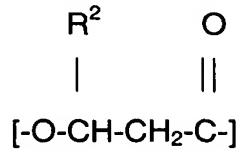
7. A method as defined in Claim 1 wherein the number average molecular weight of the first biodegradable polyhydroxalkanoate is greater than about 100,000 g/mole and wherein the number average molecular weight of the second biodegradable polyhydroxalkanoate is greater than about 50,000 g/mole

8. A method for enhancing the rate of crystallization of a first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate comprising a copolymer of at least two randomly repeating monomer units, wherein the first randomly repeating monomer unit has the structure (I):



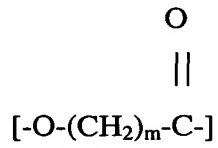
(I)

wherein R^1 is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and n is 1 or 2; and the second randomly repeating monomer unit is different from the first randomly repeating monomer unit and comprises at least one monomer selected from the group consisting of the structures (II) and (III):



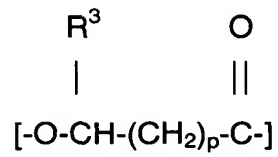
(II)

wherein R^2 is a C3-C19 alkyl or C3-C19 alkenyl, and



(III)

wherein m is from 2 to about 16, and wherein at least about 50 mole % of the copolymer comprises randomly repeating monomer units having the structure of the first randomly repeating monomer unit (I), and further wherein the copolymer has a melting point Tm1, the method comprising melt blending the first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate with a second crystallizable biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate comprising at least one randomly repeating monomer unit having the structure (IV):



(IV)

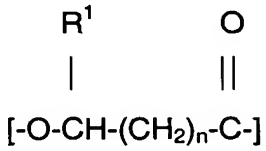
wherein R^3 is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and p is 1 or 2;
and further wherein the second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate has a melting point Tm2, wherein Tm2 is at least about 20°C greater than Tm1 and the melt blending is conducted at a temperature greater than about Tm2; and wherein the second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate is finely dispersed within the bulk of the first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate.

9. A method as defined in claim 8, wherein the second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate includes a plasticizer.

10. A method as defined in claim 8, wherein the second biodegradable polyhydoxyalkanoate includes a miscible component.

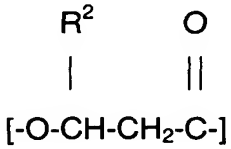
11. A method as defined in Claim 8 wherein the number average molecular weight of the first biodegradable polyhydroxalkanoate is greater than about 100,000 g/mole and wherein the number average molecular weight of the second biodegradable polyhydroxalkanoate is greater than about 50,000 g/mole.

12. A method for forming a shaped article from a first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate comprising a copolymer of at least two randomly repeating monomer units, wherein the first randomly repeating monomer unit has the structure (I):



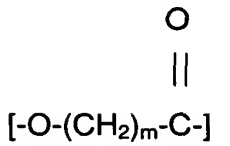
(I)

wherein R^1 is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and n is 1 or 2; and the second randomly repeating monomer unit is different from the first randomly repeating monomer unit and comprises at least one monomer selected from the group consisting of the structures (II) and (III):



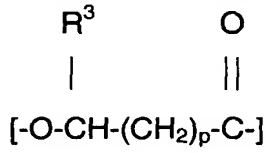
(II)

wherein R^2 is a C3-C19 alkyl or C3-C19 alkenyl, and



(III)

wherein m is from 2 to about 16, and wherein at least about 50 mole % of the copolymer comprises randomly repeating monomer units having the structure of the first randomly repeating monomer unit (I), and further wherein the copolymer has a melting point Tm1, the method comprising solution or melt blending the first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate with a second crystallizable biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate comprising at least one randomly repeating monomer unit having the structure (IV):



(IV)

wherein R^3 is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and p is 1 or 2,
and further wherein the second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate has a melting point Tm2, wherein Tm2 is at least about 20°C greater than Tm1, to form a blend composition, wherein the second biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate is finely dispersed within the bulk of the first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate; and shaping the resulting blend composition into a shaped article at a temperature greater than Tm1 and less than Tm2.

13. A method as defined in claim 12, wherein the shaping step comprises blow molding.

14. A method as defined in claim 12, wherein the shaping step comprises injection molding.

15. A method as defined in Claim 12 wherein the number average molecular weight of the first biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate is greater than about 100,000 g/mole and wherein the number average molecular weight of the second biodegradable

polyhydroxyalkanoate is greater than about 50,000 g/mole.

16. A shaped article formed by the method of claim 12.

17. A shaped article according to Claim 16 in the form of a fiber.

18. A shaped article according to Claim 16 in the form of a film.

19. A shaped article according to Claim 16 in the form of a nonwoven.

20. A method as defined in Claim 12 wherein the shaped article is crystallized at an elevated temperature in the range of from about 30°C to about 90°C.